that the presence of these oddities and occult claims does not lessen our admiration for the better class of priests who despise the use of such fraudulent practices in their profession. They refuse to stoop to these mountebank tricks and schemes for the sake of gain but trust to the all-merciful power of a benign God to meet the ills and needs of men. To them God is very real.

Few priests to-day wear a distinctive dress. There used to be priestly sacrificial garments; there is one in the West China Union University Museum, which we procured for it. This one shows a kind of back-plate ornament which is peculiar. Of its significance we remain so far in entire ignorance and until we find a clue there is no use making a guess at it. Nowadays priests mostly perform their sacrificial duties clad in the common white robe of the worshippers.

At the sacrifice in the grove only men are allowed to attend. Mixed worship is forbidden. Distance is no excuse, and nothing save bodily infirmity may deter the heads of households from being present. Worship is congregational and not to take part makes one a religious reprobate.

Elders or leaders of good repute are appointed in turns to see to all the necessary arrangements. It falls to them to select the ram or he-goat. This is done ten days ahead of time. It must be perfect in every part, body, legs and horns. And it must be white. If a wholly white animal cannot be found, a white cock is offered to atone for any spot or imperfection in colour. It is led home the day before and washed. To augment its cleansing it is next bathed in incense which is of cypress twigs. Then it is tethered in a clean place until wanted.

A new and unused rope is used to lead it to the altar. The rope, too, has to pass through the sanctifying fumes of the incense, and afterwards it may not be used for any profane purpose. A special honour rests on the person chosen to lead the victim to the grove. He is always some one reckoned worthy among his brethren. It falls to him to slay the sacrifice, and he receives an extra portion of the divided meat.

Three days beforehand the worshippers cleanse their bodies, wash their clothes and make themselves ready. No pungeant herbs such as garlic or onions may be eaten then or anything regarded as unclean. Even smoking is meantime prohibited. If possible, all go clothed in white. The very poor may wear dyed garments if they are cleansed and they have no other.

The road along which the victim is led to the grove only the worshippers may tread. No others that day may appear thereon, for that day it is sacred. Should any one inadvertently be met on it he must offer a special sacrifice to make amends for his trespass.

No outsiders are permitted to witness the New Year sacrifice. No Chiang even who are not participants are allowed near. The roads and approaches to the grove are carefully guarded against